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NOTES AND NEWS

WE take the following from *Science* for December 4: "The Scientific Association of Johns Hopkins University held the first monthly meeting of the present scholastic year in Hopkins Hall, November 11. Two important papers were presented. The first was by Professor J. B. Watson, the newly-elected professor of experimental and comparative psychology, upon the subject of "Methods and Apparatus in Comparative Psychology." Professor Watson gave a brief description of the nature of the problems in comparative psychology. The position was taken that the behavior of animals can be studied in a scientific way; that the facts thus obtained can be stated objectively and that they deserve to have equal rank with other observations in experimental psychology and in biology. The view was expressed that the study of the sensory processes of animals is the most hopeful field at present. Exact and scientific statements concerning the nature of color vision, hearing, smell, contact, etc., in animals are much needed. At present almost nothing is known in any exact way of the functioning of the sense organs of the higher animals. Such studies should be undertaken in a more comprehensive way than has heretofore been the case. Observations made by the same investigator on many species of animals are desirable at present. Only in this way can a true phylogeny of mind be obtained. When the facts are before us we shall be in a position to begin the comparison of the behavior of animals with the behavior of man. Several pieces of apparatus for testing hearing, vision, temperature, etc., were briefly described. A description of an apparatus for the study of olfactory sensations was given at length. The principal feature of this apparatus consists of a constant air blast supplied with two vents. Two leads of glass tubing attached to these vents pass respectively into two flasks containing different odorous solutions, or different intensities of the same solution, and from the flasks to short metal tubes which project into a glass-lined, air-tight compartment. The ends of the two tubes protruding into the compartment are narrowed to an opening of 1 mm. The tubes are placed about twelve inches apart and are inclined at an angle such as to force the two streams of air, laden with the olfactory particles, to converge in a funnel situated in the opposite side of the compartment. To the stem of this funnel (which projects from the compartment) a tube is attached leading to a vacuum pump. Two fine streams of air are thus forced out over the surface of the odorous fluids and thence into the compartment. At the same time the vacuum system at the opposite side of the compartment tends continuously to draw forward the two streams and to keep them in a straight line. Two partitions of glass extend from the side of the compartment through which the two streams are admitted. They run parallel to the air columns, meeting near the point at which the latter converge. The animal is admitted into the compartment at the point where the partitions meet. These partitions serve to keep the odors from mixing. Food is kept always with one of the two odors. The tubes and flasks are so arranged that they may easily be interchanged with respect to the right and left position. The animal has to go first to the right in order to get food, and then after the odors are interchanged, to the left. In the final control tests a special electric food dropping device serves to keep all food out of the compartment until the animal has actually made the correct choice. The hope was expressed that, with the help of such an apparatus, much needed knowledge concerning the development and the manner of functioning of the olfactory sense organ might be obtained. It ought to be possible, *e. g.*, to find out whether the animal is sensitive to all the range of stimuli to which the human organism responds, and how far animals differ in this respect: whether or not it is easier for the animal to associate the *nauseous, hircine,* and *fecal* odors with the getting of their food, than the *fruit, flower,* and *musk-like* odors, etc. The quantitative study (delicacy) of the functioning of this sense offers great difficulties, but it is hoped that these can be overcome, at least to such an extent as to enable us to obtain records which may be compared with similar records from man. Functional problems similar to those which arise in the study of the olfactory field arise in the study of every other sensory field. Experimental psychology is recognizing this and is rapidly coming to extend its study of sensory processes to the animal world. There is no reason to limit experiment along these lines to man alone. Such functional questions when answered will give us the much-needed complement to all the painstaking and exact structural work which has already been accomplished so abundantly."

THE list of those who will take part in the discussion of realism and idealism at the forthcoming meeting of the American Philosophical Association, at Baltimore, includes Professor Royce, of Harvard, Professors Dewey and Woodbridge, of Columbia, Professor Bakewell, of Yale, and Professor Smith, of Princeton. The presidential address will be given by Professor Münsterberg, of Harvard, on the "Problem of Beauty."